643 It is worthy of notice that no sacrifice is offered on this day, neither is any religious ceremony whatsoever performed. The coronation appears to be a purely military affair, a sort of oath of loyalty taken by the people to their chief and by the chief to his people.

C. THE OFFICIAL MARRIAGE OF THE CHIEF.

643 The chief being duly installed, the next thing to do is to 584 provide him with his officially recognised wife, *the wife of the country*, she who is to become the mother of the future king. This wife must be bought with the pennies of the people : a characteristic custom demonstrating forcibly to how great an extent the royal family is at once the property and the pride of the nation.

643 One fine day, says Tobane, when the counsellors go to visit 584 the new chief, they meet with a very cold reception : "Who do 571 you suppose is going to feed you ? Who will cook the meat ? Who is going to brew the beer ?" They return quite crestfallen, but having perfectly understood the allusion. The chief wishes to remind them that the time has arrived for them to find him a wife. This roundabout way of coming to the point is much in

643 vogue with the Blacks. The matter is at first discussed in secret 584 by the brothers and sisters of the deceased ruler, a family council 538 which holds its conclave "in the hut," i. e. privately. After due consultation, a messenger is dispatched to the principal men of the country, to the heads of the younger branches of the royal family (to Khobo, Pulane, Kupane, if Mpfumo be the clan in question) with the following message : "Has not the moment arrived to set up the chief, to cause him to grow, to increase properly ? For the country is sustained by its cock! (1)" The great ones discuss the affair, each in his own village, and a

(1) *Dji yima ni nkuku*, a proverbial expression meaning : as the poultry-yard cannot flourish without a cock, so must care be taken of the chief of the country, in order that he may be able to perpetuate the race and secure the succession.

Shinangana had been trained, would he have been a genius in that kind of mathematics where the power of reasoning is needed? It is impossible to say, but it may be noticed that all his achievements were, after all, but masterpieces of memory, and that reasoning had very little to do with them. 803 163

The conclusion of our observations is then as follows : in the Bantu mind the literary sense is infinitely more developed than the mathematical. This is probably the case in all uncivilised or half civilised races, but amongst the South Africans it is strikingly apparent.

F. THE LITERARY SENSE OF THE THONGAS.

Let us look more closely into this literary faculty which the Thonga grammar has already revealed to us. It not only consists in the possession of a well constructed language, denoting powers of classification, combination, co-ordination and graphic description, but also shows itself in the poetic expression of their feelings, in a remarkable power of comparison, and in a rich folklore. 521 537

The *facility of expression*, amongst the Thongas, is very great. Any one, man or woman, is at any time ready to speak, and speaks correctly with the greatest ease. In this respect, the race is perhaps more advanced than many civilised peoples. There is nothing like the timidity you so often meet with amongst the peasants or workmen of our own lands, who, though they have had a full course of primary education, would be totally unable to deliver an address. A Native can always stand up and say what he thinks on any given question. Even if he has not thought much about it, he can speak! Finding words is no difficulty to him. Knowledge will perhaps be lacking, but fluency of speech never! This ease of elocution has evidently been acquired through a long experience in the discussion of public affairs on the *kubo*, where, as we saw (I, p. 436), every one has the right of expressing his opinion. This habit has developed literary ability.

and the Bantus, as a whole, deserve the compliment once paid to the pupils of the Lovedale Institute by the Rev. J. Henderson, when he said to them : "Your race has certainly received the gift of eloquence!" (1) 521 537

As regards the subject matter of their speeches, it does not always show much reflection, or many new ideas. Nor is there much order or sequence in their discourses. This would require proportion, measure, forethought, and all these virtues belong rather to the arithmetical sense which is so sadly deficient in the Bantu mind. What makes a Bantu address especially interesting is rather the *power of comparison* exhibited by Bantu speakers. They excel in discovering spiritual truths in material facts, or rather in perceiving the relations between the spiritual and the external world. This is one of the characteristics of the poetical faculty, and these so-called savages certainly have some sense of poetry in their minds. Most of the antithetic riddles, which will be quoted shortly, are instances of this power of comparison. When developed by proper training, this faculty will certainly become productive of valuable work. 195 537

So far, the training of Natives has been mostly in religious subjects, and I beg to give my readers some examples of their mode of comparison which I noted while listening to the preaching of evangelists, examples which bear the strong impress of the Bantu character. Sometimes the imagination is so subtle that the result is almost incoherent. They are satisfied even if the point which the two things compared have in common, that which grammarians call the " tertium comparationis," is almost infinitesimal.

(1) This power of elocution is very useful in Mission work, when evangelising the heathen villages all over Thongaland, the converts being always willing to make a speech or deliver an exhortation. They generally do this with great animation, and although the thinking is often poor, and does not show much sequence, they at least are never at a loss for words. I only once witnessed such a sad occurence ! One of my pupils had prepared a sermon and was delivering it, when suddenly he stopped and could not proceed. He had lost the thread. Then a good natured smile appeared on his features and all his companions laughed heartily. This was the first time they had seen one of their countrymen in this predicament ! The student had prepared a plan for his address, and had forgotten it ! In former times plans were entirely absent and consequently there were no threads to lose !

823 regarding its confines and the shore on the other side. Some
791 magicians claim to have gone and stayed for some time down in the depths : to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III.)

823 The *tide* (byaela) is considered to be caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water : this is the common idea. Some Natives, however, connect it with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared : it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim : 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say : 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are the assertions of Spoon. And old Makhani expressed his approval by nodding his head!

372 "It is the same with *fire*," Spoon also remarked. There was
784 a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wished to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt. "It is their own fault," said Spoon, "when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you shout, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on to a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : 'Yo! yo! Where shall I put my child?' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on to the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame!" (1)

823 The origin of *stones* is absolutely unknown. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once drew my attention to the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and said to me :

[521] (1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I, p. 470) women at home must keep silent ; likewise when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 69), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven). See also my remarks on the kunga rite. (I, p. 124).